# The Seed Sower.

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## *Thistle-Song.*

BRIEF is the slender harebell's hour,
Frail the wild arum's hiding flower:
Let but the zephyr stir in sleep,
The wind-flowers do him reverence deep:
And fragile blows the pale dog-rose
Under a copse's lee:
But the thistles stand on the open land
Fearless, and fine to see.

O sing me that St. Crispin's day
When a forlorn and lean array,
Whereof all spangled France made sport,
Held the hard field of Agincourt.
I think the ghosts of Harry's hosts
Are thistles now, and hold
The bitter ban of beast and man
As lightly as of old.

Let slavish roots endure to grow
By permit in a planted row;
Like fools that sacrifice their summers
To grind the money-mills of commerce.
Some day of ruth they see the truth,
Which is from the beginning,—
Freedom and health are all the wealth
That's fairly worth the winning.

So you, my freemen of the field,
Fit blazon of the Highland shield,
My handsome idlers of the plain
That live for living, not for gain,
With bristled points and armoured joints
Sell dear your lives, and whom
Sharp sickles spare shall win to wear
The royal purple plume.

J. A. S.

## *Walking with God.**

BY ROBERT COLLYER.

"Enoch walked with God."—Gen. v., 22.

I LOVE to think that these words touch the most pregnant record of a good man's life we can find in our elder Scriptures, and of his death. It is said of some other men, they followed after God, or walked in the ways of God, while this man died full of years, and that man old and satisfied; but this man walked with God, as a man walks with his dear friend, voice answering to voice, hand touching hand, and face reflecting face, from the outset to the end. And, when the end comes, Death is shorn of his terrors, casting no more painful shadow on his spirit than if it were the spirit of a yearling child, so that you say, No life can be more beautiful, and no death more desirable.

The most primitive report we possess, this is still the best that can be said of any man we have ever known, and is all the more precious, as I love to believe, because my text is just as good for what it teaches you and me for doctrine as for what it testifies to life.

For, when we ask the question, Now what are the essential conditions of a perfect walk with God? we are told, in the common Christian teaching, we must do these five things: first, to study our Bible as the very word of

* Preached in the Old Meeting Church, Birmingham, on Sunday Morning, September 8th, 1907.

God and infallible; second, to come to Him through the mediation of His son, Christ Jesus; third, to become a member of the church; fourth, to keep the Sabbath Day holy; and, fifth, to observe the sacraments and the ordinances as they are set forth in the standards.

These are counted the essential conditions of a perfect walk with God; and, if I am faithful only to four of them, I am not so good a man as if I stand true to the five. While, if I say the church, the sacraments, and the holy days are not essential, and that a man may be a good Christian in some other way than by faith in what is called the atoning blood, then they will tell me sternly I cannot walk with God at all.

But when we brush the dust away and ask what this man Enoch had of all this that is made so essential, we find he had no Bible, no Church, no Sabbaths, no sacraments, and no Christ the mediator. We come by a very short and simple way to this great truth—that these things, which may be very good, are not after all essential to a perfect walk with God, else Enoch would not have been able to attain to this perfection before they were heard of in this world, and lead us to ask whether there may not be some inward and spiritual grace within these outward and visible dogmas through which at any time and in any land a man may walk with God, as *he* did, to find, when the journey on earth is ended, that death is lost in victory.

Once more, what crumbs of clear proof are needed to verify this truth can only be mentioned in the briefest way.

That the man had no Bible is proven from the fact that, even if Moses wrote the first five books, they must have been written some two thousand years after Enoch was born, by the reckoning we follow in the common chronologies; and, after the most careful study of this question of the Sabbath, we cannot infer that more than the most simple division of the time was known before Moses. A sound and orthodox divine says in Smith's Bible Dictionary, Nor could Enoch have belonged to a church except as the church belonged to him, when,

"Kneeling down to heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays."

And so it is to the end of our inquest. So I think it may be of some use to see, if we can, how much that is usually considered essential and supreme is only symbolic and subordinate after all—how the man might have been all the richer or the poorer for their presence as the grand factors in his life, and what they can or cannot be to you and me if we would walk with God.

I. First of all, I say, Enoch had no Bible; yet, sad as this may seem, and sad as it would be now to so many, it would depend very much on the man himself whether such destitution would be a bane or a blessing.

Because I may well say, I love the Bible above all other books in the world. Others I love: Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Tennyson, Emerson, and many books besides in the treasures of divine inspiration are so dear to me that there are but few sacrifices I would not gladly make rather than lose their priceless companionship. But, when I am in any great strait for words other than my own to rebuke some crying sin or stay some desperate sinner, to whisper to the soul at the parting of the worlds or read with those who weep beside their dust—words which will go to the right place as surely as corn dropped into fruitful soil on a gleaming May day—then I put aside all books but this one, the book out of which my father and my mother sang to me in the far-away time. I take this Bible, and it is like the springs which never give out in the dryest weather or freeze in the hardest, because they reach down into the warm fountains hidden in the heart of the world.

But have we not noticed this curious fact—that so many will go to the Bible for what they *want* to find rather than what they ought to find, and those who profess the most absolute submission to its authority may offer the finest proof of the supremacy of the soul over the book in the way they make it serve their purpose? So that we may find many duplicates of the old Scotch woman's minister, of whom she said, "If there is a cross-grained text in the holy book, he is sure to find it, and take it for a sermon."

The truth is the Bible is something like a great pasture into which you turn all manner of creatures. The horse takes what he wants,

and so do the kine. The sheep is true to its instinct, and so is the goat; and then the ass rolls the thistle like a sweet morsel under his tongue.

And so, when a man of a large, sweet nature and nurture comes to the Bible, he will take by a sure instinct all the large, sweet things, while the hopeful man finds the hopeful things, and the sad man the sorrowful, the hard man the hard things, and every man the things that satisfy his craving, though they may in no way make for his peace.

Now Enoch was a right-hearted man; and so the Bible would have been a wonderful blessing to his life, had there been one. It would have whispered its consolation to him in his trouble, and rebuked him with a sad sternness for his sin, would have refreshed him many a time in his weariness, and helped him to be a better man all round. But, if he had been a narrow, bitter, and bigoted man, it might have confirmed him in all that is most ugly and unlovable in one who was otherwise intending to do right, and been compelled by him, as it has been by so many, into antagonism to the purest and best truth it tells us.

Make the Bible minister to such a spirit as this, then, find in it merely the hard, bitter things to confirm a hard, bitter heart toward all but those who happen to belong to your own church, find nothing to make you tender and kind and generous to the good men who may happen to be more radical or more conservative than you are yourselves in their interpretation of the essentials of the truth and life, then you are so much the poorer with your Bible than Enoch was without one.

Because we can never afford to forget, again, how this man, walking with God, was by no means so destitute as he seems to us; but, being a man whose soul was open to the heavens, out of which whatever is best in our Bible has come to us, he had in some way a Bible after all—an Old and New Testament that was never permitted to grow dim and dusty, and was not brought out merely for good manners when the minister happened to be staying overnight, but a Bible fresh and perennial, beyond what the most of us, who say we set such store on our Bibles, can imagine.

For it is surely no light matter to remember that Enoch lived while men yet believed that the angels descended with a sweet silence on the mountains, when the things which were afterward written in the Book of Job and the elder Psalms were glistening with the dew in the sun newly risen on the race, when the pure wonder and trust of their childhood had not gone out of men's hearts, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Therefore, what Enoch had then for his Bible came to him directly from on high; and, if in some rude runic fashion he had in present possession the story of his tribe in their struggles toward a higher life, he would read the runes as the record of God's presence in their struggles in a way we do not understand, until we dare to believe, when we read the story of our own nation in our Mather, our Winthrop, our Bancroft, and other books I cannot name, it shall be with a sense of God's presence still more deep and all-pervading than we can possess when we read in the books of Moses and the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

And, when Enoch lived, if his melons were large, sweet, and plentiful, he thanked God for good melons, but we say, "I was very particular about my seed and soil," or, if his trees flourished exceedingly, they hinted some blessed thing about God's good providence to a tree, but "I remember that I send for the plants all the way to Rochester."

When Enoch lived, and flowers carpeted the dales and uplands on the Euphrates, he thought, as the poet sang, how

"Not worlds on worlds in phalanx deep
Need we to prove that God is here;
The daisy, fresh from nature's sleep,
Tells of His Hand in lines as clear.
For who but He who arched the skies,
And poured the dayspring's living flood,
Wondrous alike in all He tries,
Could raise the daisy's purple bud,
Mould its green cup, its wiry stem,
Its fringèd border nicely spin,
And cut the gold embossèd gem
That, set in silver, gleams within,
And fling it unrestrained and free
O'er hill and dale and desert sod,
That man, where'er he walks, may see
In all his footsteps there's a God?"

But in these times, when our children come to us with flowers, they treat us to scientific dissections of them, and laugh at the dear old names we give them; while we are proud, of course, as becomes the fathers of persons so learned, and say to ourselves, "This is very wonderful." But, then, we cannot but wonder whether they do see quite so much in the wild rose or the bluebell as I did, for one, when I strayed to seek them by bank and hedgerow, before I had heard of such things as Latin and botany, or dreamed that somewhere in the pre-existent heavens there were voices training to call me "Father."

Enoch lived when whatever sense of sin and retribution lay in the soul touched it to the very quick, when dyspepsia and gout, if they had them, were not to be explained away by a pleasant doctor, but really meant evil feeding and under or over work; when the words we sing out of David's Psalms, how "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork," were singing themselves in Enoch's heart, and when heaven and earth, and life and the life to come, lay near and next to the soul of the man that walked with God; when every babe born into his household was a chapter in a New Testament, teaching him some new wonder of the truth and life, and what it is to be a child of God was made clear to him in his own fatherhood and his children.

Now this Bible was open to Enoch, as it is open to every man who will look into it; and, when we think of this, we cannot wonder that he should do so well before the teachers of the truth had begun to confound the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world with one of its most blessed results; to make this mighty aid to the perfect life and upspringing end one of its most essential conditions; to soil the book in struggles for the binding, and to practically deny that in all ages they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted of Him, or that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being set forth by the things that are made.

II. Again, I will give place to no man in my love and loyalty to a true church, where men and women meet together to worship God the Father in the spirit and the truth, and can no more help meeting than our children can help rushing home from school; a brotherhood and sisterhood bound together in the bands of love, a church so true that, when you dishonour one, you dishonour every one, and where you may be sure your good name will be in safe keeping; a church, again, where reservoirs of power are filled from on high and held ready to be poured out in the true service of God and man, and where there is such a continual overflow that the store is kept sweet by its own generous flowing; a church where whatsoever things are true are welcome, and where there is such a constant deepening of the spiritual life manifested in the devout utterances of prayers and praises that every man is lifted nearer heaven at his need than he could hope to be by solitary meditation.

III. And the Sabbath I love. It may be a superstition, but, the more I study the question, the more I am drawn to the Sabbath as a primal necessity of life, apart from its special uses for worship, and am ready to admit that, if it did not take so great a place in the master-book of the master-races on the globe, we should still grope our way, somehow, to the conclusion of a great physiologist, that, "while the night's rest seems to equalise the circulation, still it does not restore the perfect balance to the life."

So it will come to pass that, while the man who neglects to take a seventh day, at least for rest, may be borne along by the vigour of his mind to continual exertion, yet in the long run he will break down sooner and more suddenly than the man who is determined to put aside at least one-seventh of his working life for rest and recreation.

And not for this alone will the Christian minister stand by the Sabbath, but because he knows that the needs of the soul are as imperative as those of the body, the hunger of the inner life is as sore as that of the outer, and no man can live by bread alone.

So I think, sometimes, there is no sight in this world so touching to a minister as the sight of his church on a Sunday, when he looks down the aisles, and there sees the lawyer, who has been all the week wrangling in the courts, and the merchant, who has been watching the fluctuations of the market; the

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mechanic, every day driven by clanging hammer and grinding wheel; the maiden, weary with incessant task-work of the school and store; and the mother, nearly worn out by the heavy cares of the home.

There we all gather; and, as those faces turn toward the minister, he seems to see no longer the man and woman full of this world's carking care, but the soul returning to her rest, seeking after God if haply she may find Him.

But, if you should ask me to join a church in which the members are isolated from each other, as if the power that should bind them was the electric fluid, and we were each one sitting in a pew of glass, and where not my own honest and free mind was respected, and the discharge of duty week-day or Sunday in a simple and loving spirit was counted for religion, but I was compelled to do or to believe things that cut across the grain of my nature at the peril of my soul; and if I was compelled to keep the Sabbath so holy that I durst not say to any man who has been so chained to his task-work all the week that he has never taken a full breath, My friend, I am set to watch for your soul, and as His minister who said the Sabbath is made for the man, not man for the Sabbath, so I tell you this is not true worship to come here every Sunday, cramping yourself over your Bible and hymn-book; the true worship, the Sabbath-keeping most sacred, will be to intersperse with your Sundays at church Sundays when you will start out on a long-stretching walk into the country, or go lie down, through a summer day, on your back at the roots of a tree, and look up into the great, quiet heavens; when you will do something that will expand your life, and sweeten and reform it, and that will take the snarl out of your brain, instead of letting me put another into it through my sermon;

IV. Or, if I were compelled, again, to accept the Sacrament as a sort of occult charm instead of a sacred remembrance, to invest it with frightful possibilities of damnation if I do not succeed, before I take it, in divesting myself of everything that is most bright and cheerful and human—then rather than be so bound to Bible, church, Sabbath, or Sacrament, I would go back and range with good old Enoch, free, self-contained, subject to God alone, as He speaks to me through Nature and the soul; and then, if any man troubled me with his impertinences about the soundness of my faith and its power to maintain me in life and in death, if no stronger argument were worth my while, I would point him to this most primitive instance from his own prime authority, and how one man doing by one need what I must do by another won this supreme testimony, that he walked with God and was translated so that he should not see death.

And this I say, not because I would take one grain of worth from these things I have named, but because I would make them of a purer and more essential worth, and yet be sure that the primal power by which a man may walk with God preceded them all, informs them all, surpasses them all, and is still so full and free that it overflows all churches, all books, and all material things, as if you should set so many vessels in a fountain of living water.

It is like the sun which fills the cups of every flower in your garden, and yet fills just as full every wild flower in the pastures, blesses me when I bend worshipping in the spirit and in truth on Gerizim or Zion or when I gather my children about me, as Enoch must, to tell them that He who made those green valleys, the shining river, the vast desert, and holds the mountains fast on their sunless pillars, folds the bird in its nest out on the slender bough, He is the God and Father of all.

So this which touches me when I commune with some noble soul in the flesh or in a book, or walk alone in the shadow of the woods and commune with the spirit I find there, while the birds sing in the branches and the sun sends down shafts of splendor, or the clouds gather and the thunders shake, the great boles awing me into silence sacred as our most sacred speech, or when I find one who can say the word which will help me step out more stoutly and steadily on the way of life and all true duty, who will turn a grave,

sweet face of pity toward me when I stumble, and will lift me up when I fall, lend me a shoulder to lean on when I am weary on the way, and compel me to feel, when I am out of heart, that there is still one true soul in this world walking with God, listening to His voice, touching His hand and sure, whenever the time comes for his departure, some new glimpse of heaven will be revealed as he enters within the shining portals, there I shall find the living word, the holy day, the church, and the holy communion.

And this is what we must try to establish and maintain—this most primitive and perennial faith—and see in all these things we may hold so dear, not the masters, but the servants of the soul, and hold all questions of Bible, Intercessor, Church, Sabbath, and Sacraments as the means, and not the end.

God the Eternal and our Father is the heart of all our worship, and we must build this faith into a strength so massive that it will withstand all assaults.

Free churches in this free land, strong and yet delicate, massive and yet tender, Christ-like and therefore most human, gracious, and true; churches in which all who are of this heart and mind will join hands and help us. Every free thinker who believes in the eternal truth, who is not crowded into a corner or hemmed in by the fire-bars, but would clasp the whole world to his heart.

And now what is religion?

I will tell you what I think it is:—

"Not blindly to disown
Thy reason, or to crouch and lay thee flat
Before a something terrible, unknown;
Not bound with bristling fence of marshalled creeds
To thunder banns from thy presumptuous throne,
Nor with the mumbled charm of counted beads
To bring God down, and make your will His own,
But in His face with reverent love to look,
Here, where it shines in sky and land and sea,
And where a prophet spake in holy book
To hear his word, and take the truth to thee
And hold it fast, and tread earth's lowly sod
With open soul, as one who *walks with God.*"

## *Growing Pains.*

By Percy F. Bicknell.

Who does not remember those pains attending youthful growth which are commonly known as "growing pains"? The faster the growth, the greater the pains, until the young organism that was at first all head and stomach has developed into proper proportions of neck and chest and limbs, to be clothed upon and rounded out later with a pleasing sufficiency of muscular and adipose tissue. Perhaps it may be possible, without being too trite or trivial, without, in short, writing one's self down a "bromide" (our thanks to Mr. Gelett Burgess for the term), to take advantage of the known correspondence between things physical and things spiritual, and to indulge in a few profitable reflections on the growing pains of the soul.

At the outset it is to be admitted that no more pious and dreary platitudes have ever been spoken or written on any subject than on the mystery of pain as a sub-section of the problem of evil. No theme is more attractive to the essayist or more easily disposed of, as he sits in slippered ease at his desk, especially if he has had but scant experience of suffering. "He jests at scars that never felt a wound." And even with a painful past to look back upon and, what is far worse, a future of anguish to look forward to, one can still, in the painless present, philosophize plausibly on the mystery of pain. "Philosophy," says La Rochefoucauld, "triumphs easily over past ills and future ills, but is itself overcome by present ills." All this is granted, and yet there must be a right way and a wrong way of looking at pain. Who can help us to find the right way?

It is an old saying that every man owes his life to-day to the pains of hunger that assailed him as an infant. It is these less acute pains, beneficent cravings necessary to growth, that the essayist may venture to consider with least appearance of presumption, only touching briefly and in the way of tentative suggestion on the greater agonies.

The fretful impatience that thinks it a sore grievance to have been thrust without one's consent into a world of toil and trouble, sin and sorrow, comes gradually to look illogical and absurd in the light of later experience, especially if that experience has been a hard and a strenuous one. It may take much thumping and bruising to cure one of dreaming about the delights of non-existence, to make one forget those favourite lines of the sad poet:—

"Who breathes must suffer,
And who thinks must mourn;
And they alone are blest
Who ne'er were born."

Nearly every one has had his moods of muddiness in which, with the German philosopher, he has lamented that this boon of non-existence has been so sparingly bestowed. But the prick of pain arouses to saner thoughts, and, with a due experience of real suffering, the unreal woes recede into the background and are gradually lost to sight. More than that, one even feels, oftener than not, a disposition to give thanks that the choice between being and not being (if so impossible a choice can be imagined) was not allowed in the beginning. Had this choice been permitted, who knows but that our hypothetical, not-yet-existent human being would have ignominously chosen to act very much as Dryden did in his last illness? Grievously afflicted with the gout, the poet was told that his only chance of recovery lay in the amputation of a mortifying toe. He refused to endure the pain of a surgical operation, and died. Pain—at least the pain of effort, of endurance, and even of extreme uneasiness in an uncongenial environment—is felt to be the necessary accompaniment of growth and progress, and, as soon as we clearly recognise an inexorable necessity, we acquire marvellously enough a glorious sense of freedom.

That pain, even of the acutest kind, is not always to be shunned, and hence may at times even be a god, because in harmony with the general scheme of things, has been felt by many a man. An acquaintance of the writer's was stricken with appendicitis, and so serious was the case that even the weight of a sheet on the affected part caused agony. A surgical operation was decided upon by the doctors in council, and of course it was assumed that the patient must take an anæsthetic. But this the patient stoutly refused to do; his sense of revolt at such an act of weakness, at so shameful a surrender (as it seemed to him), was not to be overcome; and so in the end the operation was not performed, and the patient struggled back again to life by sheer force of will we may say. Mr. William Barry related a like instance a few years ago in a London journal. This time the patient was a woman. Lying ill in a hospital, she was called upon to submit to the surgeon's knife, which she did without taking an anæsthetic, maintaining that it was wrong to shirk suffering. It is a true instinct that prompts the young savage to seek some painful or dangerous experience as an initiation into manhood. That all anæsthetics were formerly denounced by many pious persons as devices of Satan is well known.

The dull pain—sometimes it is only a vague unrest—that urges to a better and larger way of life, is a matter of universal experience. Divine discontent is one name for it, and its use is recognised. It is a pain that by long continuance may make the heart faint. Striving to overcome infirmities, the weary combatant is repeatedly baffled by his old self, which rises to taunt and ridicule him for thinking to outwit so wary a foe. "They reckon ill who leave me out," cries the irrepressible old sinner. And yet in all the dreariness and seeming hopelessness of the struggle there is balm to aching limbs in the assurance that things are always at their worst just before a change for the better, that it is darkest just before dawn. A saying of Mr. Edison's has encouragement in it; whenever he becomes convinced by every argument of reason and analogy that a thing he is trying to accomplish is scientifically impossible, then he knows he is on the verge of success. The pains of striving develop undreamt of forces in the striver. Of the greater pains of crushing sorrow Plato has said something of the same sort, only much better. All shams and unrealities, he adds,

melt in the fire of that awful furnace. The soul, a bound and sleeping prisoner, hears the knock of sorrow at her cell door, and wakens. "Nothing great or good comes without birth-pangs," says Mrs. Stowe in one of her books, "and, in just the proportion that natures grow more noble, their capacities of suffering increase."

That lesser annoyance which is caused by the presence on every side of things unbeautiful, needlessly unbeautiful, is a pain indicating the awakening or growth of æsthetic sensibility in the sufferer. A sudden perception of ugliness in the wall paper is a hopeful symptom. In the field of art, as also in the field of morals, the path to perfection lies through a series of disgusts. The heavens that once drew us with sweetness untold (to paraphrase Emerson) are no sooner reached than they are deserted for new ones. Somewhat the same feeling, the sense that present tedium may be made to serve as a preliminary to future interest and satisfaction, is voiced by Carlyle. Periods of dull ache and weariness and utter emptiness he felt to be necessary: the mind must sometimes lie fallow for a season, to rest and recover its fertility. Writing to his brother John in 1848, just after finishing his "Cromwell," and before beginning his "Friedrich," he says: "I sit still upon the brink here, and feel loathe and uncertain about plunging in. Things, one may hope, *will* ripen with me. Alas! I feel that I shall have to be miserable again before they do!" It is words like these, out of Carlyle's very human and, for all his moaning and groaning, very touching experience, that really help the one who is sitting in dulness and dejection, to bear, since they must needs be borne, the pains that are inseparably connected with growth.

## October.

CEASE to call him sad or sober,
Merriest of months, October!

Patron of the bursting bias,
Reveller in wayside inns,
I can nowhere find a trace
Of the pensive in his face;
There is mingled wit and folly,
But the mad-cap lacks the grace
Of a thoughtful melancholy.
Spendthrift of the season's gold,
How he loves to fling about
Treasure filched from Summertime!—
Never ruffling squire of old
Better loved a tavern bout
When Prince Hal was in his prime.

Doublet slashed with gold and green;
Cloak of crimson, changeful sheen,
Opulently opaline,
Of the dews that gem his breast;
Frosty lace about his throat;
Scarlet plumes that flirt and float
Backward in a gay unrest—
Where's another gallant drest
With such tricksy gaiety,
Such unlessoned vanity?

With his amber afternoons
And his pendant poets' moons—
With his twilights dashed with rose
From the red-lipped afterglows—
With his vocal airs at dawn
Breathing hints of Helicon—
With the winding of the horn
Where his huntsmen meet the morn—
Bacchanalian bees that sip
Where his cider-presses drip—
With his every piping breeze
Shaking from familiar trees
Apples of Hesperides—
With the chuckle, chirp, and trill
Of his jolly brooks that spill
Mirth in tangled madrigals
Down pebble-dappled waterfalls;
Brooks that laugh and make escape
Through wild arbors where the grape
Purples with a promise of
Racy vintage rare as love—
With his merry wanton air,
Mirth and vanity and folly,
Why should he be made to bear
Burden of some melancholy
Song that swoons and sinks with care?

O cease to sing him sad or sober—
He's a jolly dog, October!

## Father Taylor.*

THE visit of Robert Collyer to his native land, and especially to his beloved Yorkshire, has given delight not only to many old friends but to many of the younger generation who had heard much from their fathers of the blacksmith poet-preacher, and now heard his voice and looked on his beautiful face for themselves. The most impressive thing about Robert Collyer is not originality of thought, nor philosophical power, nor scholarship, but the man's broad, genial humanity, his kindly, generous outlook on all sorts and conditions of men, his big-heartedness. There is humour, poetry, pathos, and every now and then the "purple patch," but above all there is the warm feeling, the large tolerance, the kindly judgment of one who might say of himself, "Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."

It is this quality makes him an ideal biographer of Father Taylor, the well-known sailors' missionary of Boston. For Father Taylor was of the same school and nature as Robert Collyer, and this little book is a worthy tribute by one friend to the fine character and noble work of another. The one was a Unitarian, the other a Methodist, but that made no difference to their friendship. Collyer's account of their first meeting is characteristic. It was at a somewhat dull and cold prayer-meeting, presided over by Dr. Bartol, so dull and cold that Collyer's heart sank within him, that a man well on years rose to his feet and began to talk.

"So I went forward to listen when he began to speak in low, soft tones for some moments—as I caught his words—about Doves. He had seen them that morning as he came to the meeting, crowding to a window to be fed by a neighbour, and the sight had reminded him of the words of the prophet, "Who are these that fly as doves to the window?" And as he warmed to his theme his voice grew clear, and presently the old church seemed to be full of doves. They come crowding in from the New England woods and the dove-cotes at the North End—doves of the prophets' time, and doves with the dew of the May morning on their wings, white, and purple, and golden, out of the heavens and into the heavens—and then somehow we were doves, come at the Father's call that morning to be fed from his hand, or longing to plume our wings to fly away and be at rest.

"It was the enchantment to me of pure genius, the spell cast over me by one who was spellbound in his vision—the prayer-meeting of a lifetime—the pentecost of flying doves.

"Dr. Bartol asked me to speak, I remember, after the man with a vision sat down. So I said some words that sounded like an echo far removed. And I wist not who was the man who had wrought the wonder, so I asked a man who sat near me, and he answered, 'Why, that's Father Taylor,' with the wonder in his tone that any man in Boston should ask such a question. Then Dr. Bartol said he wanted to introduce me to him, and when this was done I held out my hand rather shyly, I guess, but he did not offer his in return: he opened his arms wide and gave me a great brotherly hug. He also kissed me on the cheek—quite a new experience. I had never been kissed by a man before, not even by my own father within my memory. And so it came to pass that we were fast friends from that morning to the end of his life on earth."

Taylor was an orphaned waif, first a cabin boy and seaman before the mast, then a farm labourer, then a cobbler, then a pedlar, then a Methodist local preacher, and finally Seaman's Chaplain in the city of Boston. There he won the friendship of hosts of sailors of all races, and the regard and support of all that was good in the city. For years he and his Bethel were one of the things to "do" by strangers who came to Boston. Harriet Martineau, Charles Dickens, Miss Bramner, Mrs. Jameson, and Jenny Lind, sat in his chapel and listened with wonder to his simple, graphic talk. One incident connected with Jenny Lind's visit is so characteristic of the man's method and readiness that it may be repeated. He does not appear to have known that the great singer was present, but having listened to that captivating voice

*"Father Taylor." A short biography, by Robert Collyer, Boston, U.S.A.

the night before, he could not keep her out of his discourse. He preached on amusements, "And paid a glowing tribute to the 'sweetest singer that ever alighted on our shores,' and to her modesty and charity. The sweet singer was leaning forward, listening with delight, when a very tall man sitting on the pulpit stairs rose up slowly. When Father Taylor had come to the close of his eulogy the stranger wanted to know whether a person who died at one of Jenny Lind's concerts would go to heaven. The old man glared at him a moment or two, and then said, 'A good man will go to heaven, sir, wherever he dies, and a fool will be a fool wherever he lives, though he sits on my pulpit stairs.'"

There was no man in Boston could touch the sailor-heart like Father Taylor. Channing and Lyman Beecher and Theodore Parker were preaching there, but no sailor could have understood them. They might as well have come down from Mars and spoken in the Martian tongue for any good they could do to Jack. One of the rudest of Father Taylor's hearers once touched the quick heart of the question from the sailors' stand-point when he said: "You seems to be a good old chap who knows what's what; so I will tell you what I likes along o' preachin'. When a man is a-preachin' at me I want him to take somert hot of his heart and shove it into mine—that's what I call preachin'."

Although not of their faith, the Unitarians of Boston were among Father Taylor's most generous supporters. They subscribed the money to build his chapel, not caring a bit about his Trinitarianism, but rejoicing to help one so manifestly called to God's work among a sadly-neglected class. But his friendship with the Unitarians did not always please other ministers of his own denominations. It is recorded that one of them once said to him, "Father Taylor, why do you fellowship so much with those Unitarians? If you need money we will give you all you need." He answered swiftly, "I shall not break with those Unitarians, brother, to please you, or anybody; I cannot get along without them, but I can get along without you." It was not the money he needed, but the friendship and moral backing.

He and Emerson, strange conjunction, were fast friends, in the days before Emerson came into his kingdom. Taylor loved the Sage of Concord with all his great heart, although he was puzzled by his teaching. He said, "Emerson, I think, is the sweetest soul God ever made, but he knows no more about theology than Balaam's ass knew about Hebrew grammar." Still he held that if the Devil got hold of him he would not know what to do with him. "He struck the climax of his many sayings," writes Dr. Collyer, "when someone said in his hearing he feared Emerson would go to hell. 'Go there,' he cried, shaking his mane, 'Why, if he went there he would change the climate, and the tide of emigration would turn that way.'"

Dr. Collyer has well done his part in the delineation of one of the noblest character on the distinguished roll of America's religious leaders. It is the story of one of God's own heroes told by another.

## The Valley of Life.

When I was a child joyfully I ran, hand clasped in hand, now with my mother, now with my father, or with younger, blithe companions, now in sunlight, now in shadow and dread, through the strange new Valley of Life.

Sometimes on the highroad, then over the fields and meadows, or through the solemn forests; sometimes along the happy brookside listening to its music or the roaring of the falls, as the pleasant waters hurried, or grew still, in the winding way down the Valley of Life.

And as we went along, hand clasped in hand, sometimes the hand-clasp was broken, and I, a happy child, ran swiftly aside from the path to gather flower or fruit or get sight of a singing bird; or to lean down and pluck a pearly stone from under the lapping waves; or climbed a tree and swayed, shouting, on it waving boughs—then returned to the clasp of loving hands, and so passed on and on down the opening Valley of Life.

In the bright morning I walked wondering; wondering I walked through the still twilight and many-coloured sunset; watching

the great stars gather, and lost in the mystery of worlds beyond numbers and spaces beyond thought—till, side by side, we lay down to sleep under the stars in the Valley of Life and of Dreams.

Then there came a time when the hands that held me—the loving hands that guided my steps and drew me gently on—turned cold, and slipped from my grasp; I waited, but they came not back, and slowly and alone I plodded on down the Valley of Life and of Death.

Where went they?—I asked my heart and the whispering waters and the sighing trees—where went my loving and well-beloved guides; did they climb the hills and tarry; did they, tired, lie down to sleep and forget me for ever; leaving me to journey on without their dear care down the long Valley of Life?

I could not know, for I heard no answer except my own heart's beating. But other comrades came—one dearer than all—and as time went on I felt the little hands of my own children clasping mine while, once more happy and elate, with them I travelled down the miraculous Valley of Life.

But, as on I wander, hearing their bright voices, and seeing their joy upon the way—their happy chasings here and there, their eager run to hold again our hands—how soon, I think, shall I feel the slipping away of the clasping fingers while I fall asleep by the wayside, or climb the cloud-enveloped hills, and leave those I love to journey on down the lonely Valley of Life?

And I say, surely the day and the hour hasten; grief will be theirs for a season; then will they, as did I, with brave hearts journey on the appointed way—but where then shall my spirit rest? Will it sink unconscious into endless night? or shall I, in some new dawn, and by some unimagined miracle not less than that which brought me here, wander, with those that led me once, and those I led, hand clasped in hand as of old, by the murmuring waters and under the singing trees of the ever-wonderful, the never-ending Valley of Life?

Richard Watson Gilder.

## The Moral Life.

It is often an occasion for sadness that we can relise our ideals but in small measure; and, though we may be called moral, may think ofourselves as such, still how far short we come from any exalted virtue! It is by a series of compromises that we live; and, when moral questions of any degree of complexity come before us, conscience, which we have been taught is the guide and monitor, is very apt to play us false, and leave us in a maze of doubt rather than on a clear road with indubitable finger-posts pointing the way.

Still we believe there is an absolute right if we could only discover it, and our desire is not to live by compromises, but to find the beautiful adjustments of justice, truth, probity, honesty. But society is built on a scaffolding not absolutely plumb, but exactly straight and true. We are told if this is too rudely shaken, the whole fabric will come down with a rush and bury us all.

Our commercial system, our political methods, are inveighed against as more immoral than they have ever been. The food we eat, through its adulterations, is said to be condemned of all that is honest and of good report. Adulteration, we are told, has infected the farmer to such a degree that he is no more to be trusted than the city dealer. Wide-spread deceit, the plausible outside that hides a lie, has undermined much of the old-time honesty of which we once boasted. These things hardly seem to lower the standing and influence of the men who practise them. The belief that you may rob the community and still be a moral person is wide-spread.

It is an age of leniency toward all but flagrant crimes. This leniency and the admiration and envy of great fortunes made by questionable means has lowered the standard of the moral life even of those who wish to preserve a high and fine ideal of right-dealing and noble living. It is very hard to maintain lofty standards when we live under relaxed conditions surrounded by an atmosphere not morally tonic and stimulating.

Benevolence is one of the shrewdest and cleverest means of covering moral tergiversation. It seems a great pity that anything so good and beautiful should be used for such base ends. It stops people's mouths for very shame. How can they strike the hand that feeds them? Having once accepted the gift, are they not in a certain sense partakers in the turpitude of its acquisition? The immense power and influence of money has undoubtedly had its effect in lowering the moral life. The rapid increase of great fortunes has been a potent example. To the young it has been a glittering bait, and has led to many unscrupulous methods that once would have excited wide-spread condemnation. The glamour of money has the tendency to wither the rigors of the moral conscience, and make success an adored object of worship.

Success, however achieved, becomes the god of their idolatry to many who own no other God. We are often told that under present conditions it cannot be achieved by strictly honest methods. The man too scrupulous goes down before the mad rush of the crowd, who have left their scruples far behind.

We find right thinking a difficult and thorny path. The iron has gone out of our blood. The old Puritan strain has become pale and almost colourless. For a few great crimes we can be indignant, but for the preservation of our national integrity that the salt may not lose its savor we are apathetic. Are we an honest people? That is the searching question, dividing bone from marrow. We are too apathetic on the moral side. It does not take long for a community to run down in its ethical relations. A few shameful things condoned, a lax condition in a few households, a selfish policy of minding our own business, shutting our eyes, and letting public morals go to the dogs, and the infection spreads unmolested. No healthy public opinion clears the air and sweeps away the contagion. More than one small community has gone through this deteriorating process because of the indifference of those who called themselves moral. Art thou thy brother's keeper? Art thou keeper to the next door neighbour who is going wrong? Art thou the keeper of the drunkard in the slums? of the gambler in his hell? of the bigger gambler on the Stock Exchange? Answer it to God!

## The Fellow who Fights Alone.

THE fellow who fights the fight alone,
With never a word of cheer,
With never a friend his help to lend,
With never a comrade near,
'Tis he has need of a stalwart hand
And a heart not given to moan,
He struggles for life and more than life—
The fellow who fights alone!

The fellow who fights the fight alone,
With never a father's smile,
With never a mother's kindly tone
His sorrowful hours to guile,
Who joins the fray at the dawn of day,
And battles till light is flown,
Must needs be strong for the fight is long—
The fellow who fights alone!

Ah, bitter enough the combat is,
With every help at hand,
With friends at need to bid Godspeed,
With spirits that understand;
But fiercer far is the fight to one
Who struggles along unknown—
Ah, brave and grim is the heart of him,
The fellow who fights alone!

God bless the fellow who fights alone,
And arm his soul with strength,
Till safely out of the battle rout
He conquering comes at length,
Till far and near into every ear
The fame of his fight is blown,
Till friend and foe in the victor know
The fellow who fights alone!

—DENNIS A. MCCARTHY.

GOD is ever ready, but we are very unready; God is nigh unto us, but we are far from him; God is within, but we are without; God is at home, we are strangers.—*John Tauler.*

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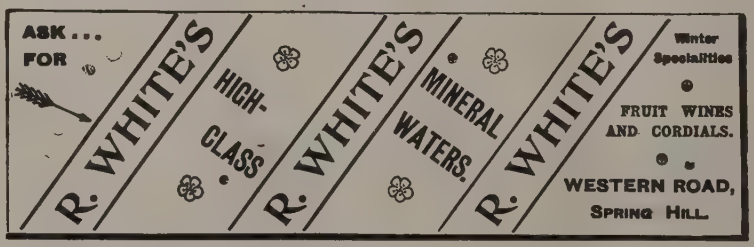
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## Notes and Jottings.

To rebuke the impatience of men, September came, with yellow corn whitening to harvest and a golden abundance of sunlight, making glad the heart of the lingering holiday-maker. In the last sheaf of notes I wrote in praise of a rainy and boisterous August, and tried heroically to make believe we were having the best of all possible weathers. If memory betrayeth not, something was said to the effect that no joy was comparable with the joy of trudging knee-deep in a bog, while singing through chattering teeth and blue lips the Song of the Open Road. Allons! What I have said, I have said, and it is not seemly to go back on it now.

* * * * * *

Yet candour compels one to admit that there is another side to the matter. Indeed, with wise forethought, another point of view was frankly anticipated in the last issue, when it was suggested that an unscrupulous advocate might still have the hardihood to enter a plea for yellow sands, sea-dreams, and a blazing sun. I have now submitted this astounding contention to the test of practical experience, and find that after all the case may be adjudged a sound one.

* * * * *

The Editor's writ, which I failed to escape on the West Coast of Wales, now tracks me down on the East Coast of England. That was Allen Raine's country; this is Tennyson's—a weird world, a veritable "flat-land," one might suppose of only one dimension. It is breadth without height or depth (like the New Theology an orthodox critic would say), or only so much height as a windmill serves to indicate, and such depth as the dykes reveal.

* * * * *

Let this be, if you will, a superficial view, yet it brings to the heart the wonder of an unfading universe—a boundless sky, an infinite sea, and far plains stretching into illimitable horizons, suns "round as the shield of my forefathers," burning blood-red through the dancing haze, mellow after-glows laden with the scents of evening, long shadows of mysterious twilights, yellow moons, and the bright pageantry of stars.

* * * * *

All this and more is treasured up in the memory, pictures to dwell on when the spirit faints, draughts of wine (unfermented) when the body drags wearily through foggy, gas-lit streets on winter nights, a pure atmosphere of reflection when the lungs pant for the breath of the sea, a remaining benediction, and a faith in the ultimate benevolence of things when committees will not let you have your own sweet will and refuse to be guided by your manifestly superior wisdom.

* * * * *

So here we are, holidays over, back again in the old world. Pity the poor parson! He loves his people and is glad to be among them again, but it is a wrench to adjust the mind to Church affairs and the preaching of sermons. "Subjects" are flown over the ocean with the swallows, "ideas" were dispersed as we looked at last night's sunset and heard the sea-birds' cry. We must all take Dr. Johnson's advice, "Sit down doggedly, sir."

* * * * *

With a view to getting myself in some way related to what is going on in the theological world I hurriedly swept a bookstall of its religious papers. The *British Weekly* is at least unfailingly irritating if it is not always interesting. There one read that "Tuesday was a historic day of the twentieth century, and marked an epoch in the Christian Church." Come now, had the Vatican at last capitulated to Father Tyrrell, and was the next meeting of the International Conference to be held in St. Peter's? Not so, alas! Still something promising, if not for Roman Catholicism yet for Christian Catholicity, had occurred, namely, the union of the Bible Christians, the Methodist New Connexion, and the United Methodist Free Churches in one new body—The United Methodist Church.

The Wesleyan Methodists and the Primitive Methodists still remain outside. But the movement for unity has begun, and that is something. So far as it rectifies to some extent "the fissiparous tendency of Dissent" and changes schism into union it is to be welcomed, but in so far as it is only another ecclesiastical combination in the dogmatic and credal interest it is an obstacle in the way of the Church Universal. I do not know the terms of the basal trust, but I fear it is sure to incorporate a body of strict doctrine. This doctrine will henceforth be entrenched behind huge vested interests other than those of the pure undogmatic religion of Christ.

* * * * *

Elsewhere in the same paper I was surprised and delighted to see words of fine breadth and wisdom in the column headed, "The Rev. David Smith's Correspondence." The Rev. R. J. Campbell used to have charge of this public confessional, and his contributions were a welcome feature of the paper. But Mr. Campbell disappeared, and another and more orthodox writer reigned in his stead. I hope he may be allowed to write in peace, undisturbed by the heresy-hunters—for there are signs in this column of the better spirit of our day. Replying to a correspondent who has asked, "What is the attitude of Christ to 'honest doubt'?" he says, "I fear there are people of a low type of character who accept the Christian creed, untroubled by doubt; and the truth it seems to me, is that the Christian dynamic flows not from one's acceptance of a creed, but from one's personal attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ."

* * * * *

He even goes further, and points out that "When a man came to Jesus in the days of His flesh, He did not present him with a creed and demand his acceptance of it as the condition of discipleship. He said simply, 'Follow Me'; and if the man was willing to make the great surrender and cast in his lot with the homeless Son of Man that was enough. The condition of discipleship was not theological orthodoxy, but personal devotion."

Mr. Smith guards himself by saying this was only the beginning, but the great point is conceded that "What makes men one is not theological agreement but longing after Christ. And this is what makes men Christians." He further courageously says that "Our hymn-books are a standing protest against the unscriptural tendency to make creed the test of discipleship," and mentions "Nearer, my God, to Thee" as having been written by a Unitarian.

* * * * *

All this is excellent. But will Mr. Smith now have the courage to apply it in the matter of organisation? Will he say outright that the Christian Church should receive members into fellowship on the terms of Christ himself? Will he say that a Church is unfaithful to its Head if it fails to recognise in its trust-deeds and constitution what hitherto our own churches have been persecuted for recognising, namely, that "The condition of discipleship was not [and is not] theological orthodoxy, but personal devotion?" If he is prepared to take up this position without equivocation or reserve we may hail him as a comrade in the Free Catholic campaign.

J. M. Lloyd Thomas.

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An act of goodness is in itself an act of happiness. It is the flower of a loving inner life of joy and contentment; it tells of peaceful hours and days on the summit heights of the soul.—*Maeterlinck.*

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The mother's arms encircle but one; but God clasps every yearning soul to his bosom, and gives to it the peace which passeth understanding, beyond the reach of care or storm.—*H. W. Beecher.*

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Faith in God gives faith in the divine laws as the regular method by which truth and goodness are to prevail. As the world acquires more faith in the supremacy and universality of law, it also comes to believe more in progress.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

# For the Children.

## Johnny.

He can scamper a mile to the football field,
And he never feels the heat;
But, oh, it's so far to the corner shop,
So far for his aching feet.

He can run to see the circus come in,
And stand and watch by the hour;
But the post-office building is so far away,
And there might come up a shower.

He can get up at five on holiday days,
It's really no trouble at all;
But eight is too early on all other days,
And his mother may call and call.

He can sit up all hours to frolic, and not
Get sleepy or tired a bit;
But, if there's a lesson, or problem to do,
He goes fast asleep over it!

O Johnny, dear Johnny, how funny you are!
And when will grow-ups understand
That hard things seem easy, and easy ones hard,
To youngsters all over the land?

## The Minutes.

Oh, the little minutes—oh, the minutes, every one.
Are the tiny steps that I go climbing with the sun;
Up the stairways of the day, we glancing, dancing, go,
And I'm happy climbing with the little minutes, oh.

Oh, the little minutes—but they're big enough to find—
Step by step I climb them, till I leave a day behind.
They're the easy steps upon the stairways of the day,
Guiding, leading, through the lovely golden Lands of Play.

## "Couldn't" and "Could."

"Couldn't" and "Could" were two promising boys
Who lived not a great while ago;
They had just the same playmates and just the same toys,
And just the same chances for winning life's joys,
And all that the years may bestow.

And "Could" soon found out he could fashion his life
On lines very much as he planned;
He could cultivate goodness and guard against strife;
He could have all his deeds with good cheer to be rife,
And build him a name that would stand.

But poor little "Couldn't" just couldn't pull through,
All the trials he met with a sigh;
When a task needed doing, he couldn't, he knew;
And hence, when he couldn't, how could he? Could you,
If you couldn't determine you'd try?

## News from the Field.

Though we are at the beginning of a new season of activity, there are so many of our Ministers and active Laymen in Canada and the United States, that much of our ordinary work has to be held in abeyance, waiting the return of the pilgrims.

Yet, as will be seen, changes have taken place and even more are impending.

We notice that the *Rev. D. R. Davies* has begun his work at *Rawtenstall;* that *Mr. W. M'Mullen* has accepted a call to *Swinton;* that *Rev. W. Lindsay* has been welcomed at *Sunderland;* that the *Rev. E. B. Betham* goes to *Tavistock;* the *Rev. R. P. Farley, B.A.*, succeeds the *Rev. Sydney H. Street, B.A.*, at *Bell Street Mission* in October; the *Rev. R. N. Cross, M.A.*, is to be assistant minister at *Essex Church, London;* the *Rev. Geo. V. Crook* has resigned his charge at *Newry;* and the *Rev. J. H. Green, M.A.*, leaves *Lydgate* in *October.* Changes like these seem to be inevitable, but they probably only lead to larger work and greater success.

The *Rev. Gardner Preston* has said his farewell to his friends at *Hastings*, in order to undertake onerous work at *Hamburg.* All good wishes from many friends will go with him to Germany.

When the wanderers from the West return doubtless we shall not only learn what they have seen, heard, and done, but we shall see many changes in position, and modes of work which will doubtless prove beneficial to our scattered Churches.

Bereaved as we are and have been, it has been a great delight to see and hear our venerable and gifted friend, Robert Collyer, from America. The old man eloquent, whose zeal and powers are little abated, has charmed and inspired many of his old friends by his visits to their Churches and homes, and has shown to the newer generation what great souls have sprung from our cottage homes in England, and how

largely some of them have influenced life and thought on both sides of the Atlantic. The University of Leeds has honoured itself and the Poet-Preacher alike by conferring its Degree of *Dr.Litt.* on the venerable visitor from New York, and the Unitarians of England have rapturously welcomed to their pulpits this famous and notable preacher. While many of our preachers have gone for a time to America it has been a joy to welcome one of the most notable of American, though English-born, to our shores, our churches, and our homes.

And as if this one sensation were not enough, day by day, and week by week, we have been quickened by the story of the good and romantic doing of our Vans, with their Preachers, in many parts of the country—in great cities, quiet villages, wayside lanes, market fairs, and other places, where the people have gladly gathered to listen to the uplifting and cheering story of the Liberal Gospel set forth by our devoted Evangelists. This record has sufficed to keep us alive and alert, and to show to all whom it may concern that our cause is growing in acceptance. and is largely embraced by many who were ignorant of our position, but were glad to welcome it where plainly set forth before them. Who can tell what results may follow this new propagandism?

And from the "Crow's Nest" *Mr. Lummis* has kept us enthrallingly interested in Swiss life and thought, and his own adaptation to the new life as a Swiss Pastor of three churches. Step by step we have followed him in his successful struggles amid, to him, new languages and peoples, and his setting forth the everlasting gospel in German, French, and Ladin to the dwellers in the secluded upland valleys among the Swiss mountains. There are not a few in England who will welcome his return to labour once more among us.

An interesting topic has been started for discussion, while so many of our Pastors are away, as to whether places of worship should be closed during holiday seasons. There are many things to be said, and said wisely, on both sides of this interesting subject; but for ourselves we must say we prefer that there shall be no break in the continuity of our religious services. If Pastors are away, many of our people are at home, and some of them reverently and fittingly could conduct services for the edification of those whose steps would gladly turn to the old paths, and who desire to lift up their hearts to God in the places sanctified by holy memories and chastened associations. Our feeling is against the closing of the doors of our places of worship.

One by one leaders, teachers, and workers pass away from our midst. Our ranks are broken. and vacant places are left. But the tides of life are continuous. New comers greet the dawn, and take up the work of life, and the development of our race and our work goes on unceasingly. Yet we cannot but reverently pause for a last greeting and spiritual handclasp with those whose faces on earth we shall see no more.

Young men like *F. Tyssul Jones*, of *Swansea;* and venerable men like *A. Dugdale*, of *Manchester; J. Harrison*, of *Padiham;* and *Alfred Bache*, second son of the late *Rev. S. Bache*, of *Birmingham*, pass away from us. We miss them, and mourn them, but commit them in trust and faith to the Great Father, knowing that all will be well, and still, with our faces to the Light, we go forward.

SCRUTATOR.

Sept. 18th, 1907.

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IN all things throughout the world the men who look for the crooked will see the crooked, and the men who look for the straight will see the straight.—*Ruskin.*

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The *Seed Sower* is admirably adapted for localising, and facilities are provided for that purpose. The circulation is already larger than that of any other magazine or journal published to meet the wants of our Free Churches. It gives a larger amount of matter, and every increase of circulation will be used to secure increased efficiency.

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